

Harpswell Conservation Commission
Minutes for meeting of August 18, 2009, 3:00 PM,
Municipal Office Building, Mountain Road, Harpswell, Maine

Members present: Mary Ann Nahf (chair), Deirdre Strachan, Don Jones, Burr Taylor, Ann Nemrow.
Absent. Tony Barrett, Anne Perry
Non-members present: Carol Tukey, Town Planner, Marcel Polak MEACC

Meeting called to order at 3:02 pm by M. Nahf. Minutes of July 21, 2009 approved. Moved by A. Nemrow seconded by M. Nahf. Unanimously approved.

Old Business:

Upland Lane parcel: Reviewed site-visit on 8/17 by several commission members. Consensus of those members was that by virtue of the location of the land and its topography it seems to protect Long Reach by itself. The foundation that is present is set back approximately 500' from the property line and the house would be a relatively small footprint. This is not a subdivision but part of the Upland Land road association. HCC will advise the selectmen that they do not feel this piece of property is of a critical nature that needs to be acquired by the Town. Jim Hayes, the Town harbormaster, may take some HCC members to see the lot from the water side before final decision is forwarded to selectmen. Those who can go will meet on 8/20 at 10:30 at Town Hall.

Subcommittee Reports:

Conservation Education: HCC will meet with the Selectmen in September or October to inform them of the projects that HCC is currently working on.

Land Conservation: Presently three oportunites for grants. Question posed by D. Strachan, do we want to apply for any and for what pieces of land. Maine Nat'l. Resources Conservation Fund deadline is 9/15. Harpswell is in the Casco Bay Coast Region and \$210K is available for coastal, tidewater and freshwater wetlands. Vernal Pools (VP) not qualified for grant in our area but M. Polak will check further to determine if we might qualify for VP in Harpswell. Basin Cove land parcel may be the best fit for this grant. HHLT is currently involved with owner of land in acquisition discussion. Land is approx. 80 acres and touches both Curtis Cove and Basin Cove in South Harpswell. About one third of property is wetlands and land has been appraised at approx. \$800-900K. The wetlands survey that has been done shows a significant wetland. Parcel meets several criteria for the grant. Otter Brook corridor also may be a possibility, though for a later date. Easements on or purchase of two lots [man1]on Hildreth that abut current Town property also a possibility. It was decided to submit a letter of support for HHLT's acquisition of the Basin Cove property and advise them to file for the grant since they are already involved and they seem to be a better fit.

Wharton Trust Grant deadline is 9/15. A grant from Wharton funded the Open Space Plan so it was decided to apply to them for a grant to assist the Town in future mapping of vernal pools. D. Strachan will write the grant letter.

Senter Grant also available. Less money - \$5 to 10K - but may be appropriate for conservation educational materials and/or brochures for the Town.

New Business:

Orr's Island Bridge: wharf and pier issues brought to the attention of the Commission. It has been determined by the State that the Town owns the land. Thus, the leases are under the purview of the Town. The HCC thinks mixed-use, while preferable, may be difficult given the fact that this area has been used in the past by commercial fishermen. HCC will not offer specific advice to selectmen but state that it feels water access is important for all Harpswell residents.

B. Taylor suggested that the Commission contact local real estate agencies in order that the HCC be kept apprised of lots of land that become available for sale in the Town. Primarily larger parcels but not necessarily limited to those. Doing this will help identify important parcels for future acquisition or protection. HCC agreed we should proceed on this matter. M. Polak may be able to help in this area and other Concom members offered to make contacts as well.

M. Nahf announced that the HHLT is having a program on Sat. August 22 at 9:30am with an entomologist leading a walk through the Skolfield preserve to help identify invasive insect species.

M. Nahf handed out to members the Brunsick NAS Environmental Restoration News that has an important article regarding the eastern plume of contaminants that is moving toward Harpswell Cove.

Future HCC meetings:

Sept. 1 Concom at 3:00pm Lands subcommittee at 1:00pm

Sept. 8 Education subcommitte at 3:00pm

Sept. 15 Concom at 3:00pm Lands subcommitte at 1:00pm

Adjourned at 4:44pm
Donald Jones, sec'y.